DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 168 091 CS 502 445

AUTHOR Hellweg, Susan A.
TITLE An Examination of the Ideal Political Candidate as a Function of Selected Voter Characteristics.
PUB DATE Mar 79
NOTE 30p.; Paper presented at the Western Political Science Association Conference (Portland, Oregon, March 1979)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS College Students; *Communication (Thought Transfer); *Credibility; Elections; *Political Attitudes; *Public Opinion; *Role Perception; *Social Science Research
IDENTIFIERS *Homophily

ABSTRACT

A study utilizing source credibility and homophily as a basis for analysis was designed to examine the conceptualization of the ideal political candidate. In addition, this conceptualization was examined across selected voter characteristics to determine if it varied on that basis. Questionnaires were administered to 390 college students to measure the perceived credibility, homophily, and dogmatism of the ideal male political candidate. Demographic information was also elicited for each student. An analysis of the results revealed that the ideal political candidate was perceived to be extremely competent, extremely high in character, quite composed and sociable, slightly extroverted, slightly similar to the voters in attitudes and beliefs, and neutral in similarity in terms of background and personality. Furthermore, the findings indicated that this conceptualization did not vary as a function of voter sex, political party affiliation, liberal/conservative tendencies, or dogmatism. (Author/FL)

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AN EXAMINATION OF THE IDEAL POLITICAL CANDIDATE AS A FUNCTION OF SELECTED VOTER CHARACTERISTICS

Susan A. Hellweg

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Paper presented at the Western Political Science Association Convention

Political Behavior Section

Portland, Oregon

March 1979

The author is currently Assistant Director of Research and holds a faculty position in the Behavioral Science Graduate Program at California State University, Dominguez Hills. This paper is based upon her doctoral dissertation, directed by Dr. Kenneth K. Sereno at the University of Southern California, 1977.

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ABSTRACT

This study was designed to determine the nature of the ideal political candidate, employing source credibility and homophily as a basis for analysis. It was demonstrated that the ideal political candidate is seen as extremely competent, extremely high in character, quite composed and sociable, slightly extroverted, as well as slightly similar to the voters in attitudes and beliefs and neutral in similarity in terms of background and personality. Furthermore, it was shown that this conceptualization does not vary as a function of voter sex, political party affiliation, liberal-conservative tendencies, or dogmatism. Implications of the findings and suggestions for future research were advanced.

AN EXAMINATION OF THE IDEAL POLITICAL CANDIDATE AS A FUNCTION OF SELECTED VOTER CHARACTERISTICS

The success of a political campaign depends largely upon the qualities of the candidate that are communicated to the electorate. Campaign specialists make an effort to see that their candidate is presented to the public according to a particular image. It is the task of the campaign specialist and his/her staff to infuse positive candidate characteristics into the minds of the electorate in the face of less optimal realities. A selection process ensues in which the campaign organizers choose what information shall be projected to the public, in terms of appealing candidate qualities, and through what channels these attributes can be most effectively communicated. A principal strategy of a campaign specialist is to establish what members of the voting public conceive as the ideal political candidate and then convince them that his/her candidate falls within the parameters of this conceptualization.[1] For any election, voters acquire an overall vision of the ideal candidate and use it as a gauge in evaluating the acceptability of actual candidates.[2]

A political campaign centers upon the activities of an individual (the candidate) within a particular context (the campaign setting) which are designed to influence the behavior of an audience (the voters), so as to enhance his/her own interests (win the election). This process, as it is described, fits within the parameters of the persuasion paradigm examined by behavioral scientists, specifically communication researchers. Its basic components consist of a source communicating messages to an audience in a specific context and receiving feedback in return.

As the communication paradigm seems to be an integral part of a political campaign, so would source valence[3] constructs, such as credibility and homophily, appear to be relevant to the perception of political campaign candidates.

A number of researchers have supported the view that perceptions of candidate image act as a significant factor in voting behavior. Boyd[4] found that 38.6% of the variance in voting defection in general elections could be explained by perceptions of the candidates. Fagen[5] believes that the widest distribution of a positive image is more important to a candidate than the conveyance of information. Sears[6] rationalizes the importance of images over issues by stating that voters prefer to personalize politics, that since images are so simple, the informational basis for feeling one way or another about a candidate is often forgotten. Natchez and Bupp,[7] in drawing upon an analysis of voting patterns in presidential elections from 1952-1964, conclude that candidate image provides the single best predictor of voting behavior. Andersen and Kibler[8] found that 61.6% of their subjects could be correctly assigned to their candidate preference category on the basis of source valence responses.

The notion that communication effectiveness is mediated by the attitude that a receiver has toward a communication source has received widespread empirical support.[9] This attitude is based upon the way in which a receiver perceives a communicator; a multitude of stimulus factors are involved in the evaluation of a communication source. Empirical evidence[10] suggests that perceptions of source credibility and homophily are related to the assessment of a communicator.[11] Receivers are more persuaded by communication sources perceived as credible than by those perceived less favorably. In addition, it is generally the case that sources

homophilous with their receivers are more persuasive than those who are not.

The identification of attributes associated with the ideal political candidate has been the focus of a number of empirical studies. Trenaman and McQuail,[12] for example, demonstrated that the ideal British governmental official exhibits strength, humility, integrity, and an ability to empathesize. Tannenbaum, Greenberg, and Silverman[13] asked respondents to indicate their conceptualization of the ideal American president, so as to examine it against their conceptualizations of two presidential candidates, Richard Nixon and John Kennedy. In doing so, they found that for the ideal president, the ratings fell in one of three categories (a seven being the highest point on the semantic differential scale) for each of the following adjectives: (1) between six and seven -- wise, fair, experienced, strong, active, deep, and calm; (2) between five and six -- virile and colorful; and (3) between four and five -- liberal, young, and warm. Sigel[14] presented respondents a list of ten attributes from which to choose the three most important qualities in an American president. The three adjectives which emerged most frequently were (in order of their relative importance): (1) honesty; (2) intelligence; and (3) independence. Additionally, Blumler and McQuail[15] provided British respondents a list of twelve attributes and requested them to select from that list the three traits most important for running the country. The four adjectives which emerged in the top three positions (two adjectives tied for third place), in order of their appearance, were: (1) straightforward; (2) hard-working; and (3) sincere/strong.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study was designed to examine the nature of the ideal political candidate, employing source credibility and homophily as a basis for analysis. In addition, this conceptualization was examined as a function of selected voter characteristics, in order to determine if this conceptualization varied on this basis. The dependent variables were the responses to the source credibility and homophily instruments. The independent variables were selected demographic and personality characteristics of the respondents: (1) sex; (2) political party affiliation; (3) liberal-conservative tendencies; and (4) degree of dogmatism. The research questions for this study were:

(1) How do voters conceptualize the ideal political candidate?

(2) Does this conceptualization vary as a function of voter sex, political party affiliation, liberal-conservative tendencies, or degree of dogmatism?

SUBJECTS

The three hundred and ninety subjects employed in this study were students from social science classes at California State University, Long Beach. Of these, 49.7% were males and 49.7% were females (no response: 0.5%). In terms of respondent political party affiliation, the following breakdown was reported: (1) 49.2%, Democrats; (2) 33.1%, Republicans; (3) 12.6%, Independents; (4) 3.1%, other; and (5) 2.1%, no response. Based upon responses to a seven-point scale, the following was observed relative to the liberal-conservative tendencies of the subjects (a "one" being the most liberal position, a "seven" being the most conservative

position): (1) a mean of 3.715; (2) a mode of 3.000; and (3) a median of 3.672. In terms of respondent dogmatism, the following was reported, based upon responses to a twenty-item scale: (1) a range from a score of 32 to 100 (a "20" being the most extreme possible score for a high dogmatic, a "120" being the most extreme possible score for a low dogmatic); (2) a mean of 62.804; (3) a mode of 55.000; and (4) a median of 62.231.[16]

MATERIALS

The instruments employed in this study were the following: (1) for measuring source credibility, the scales (thirty semantic differential items) developed, specifically for assessing the perceived credibility of public figures, by McCroskey, Jensen, and Todd[17]; (2) for measuring homophily, the scales (thirteen semantic differential[18] items) developed, specifically for assessing the perceived homophily of public figures, by Andersen and Todd[19]; and (3) for measuring dogmatism, the scales (twenty Likert scale items) developed by Troldahl and Powell.[20]

PROCEDURE

The administration of all questionnaires to the subjects occurred within the week prior to the 1976 General Election. Respondents were initially provided with a short demographic questionnaire to ascertain their sex, political party affiliation, and their perceived liberal-conservative tendencies on a seven-point semantic differential scale.[21] Following this, subjects were asked to complete credibility and homophily items in response to the ideal male political candidate.[22] Subsequent to the completion of these questionnaires, respondents were asked to fill out the twenty-item dogmatism scale. On all

questionnaires, subjects were given a guarantee of the anonymity of their responses to the items. Upon completion of all the scales, all subjects were debriefed by the researcher as to the specific nature of the study.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data derived from this study were submitted to a variety of statistical procedures: (1) Q-factor analysis, to determine if differences in respondent characteristics, as reflected in the receiver variables utilized in this study, were responsible for variances across source valence items in the perception of the ideal political candidate; (2) single sample *t*-test to test the extremity of the semantic differential against any other positioning of the ideal political candidate; and (3) strength of association test (omega squared), to determine the substantive effect of any significant deviations from the extremity of the semantic differential, as well as to specifically locate the target source on the scale through subsequent calculations. In addition, frequency distributions were computed, in order to establish means and standard deviations. Data for each construct were handled separately in each analysis. The above statistical procedures were intended to be sufficient to answer both research questions developed for the study, in addition to yielding information pertinent to, but not explicitly demanded by, the research questions as stated.

RESULTS

Q-Factor Analysis

The data collected through this research were initially submitted to Q-factor analysis[23] to determine if differences in respondent characteristics were responsible for variances

across scale items in the conceptualization of the ideal political candidate. Performance of the Q-factor analysis was designed to reveal subgroups of respondents on the basis of their scale item positionings, that is, that individuals would cluster into groups as a function of their own unique definition of the ideal candidate. It was assumed that these "respondent types" could be subsequently assigned specific labels as a function of the receiver variable categories tapped in this study, upon the submission of the data to discriminant analysis.

Due to the variable limitations of all computer statistical programming packages for factor analytic procedures, it was decided that for the purposes of the present analysis the subjects would be randomly divided into four groups. The Q-factor analysis performed upon each of the four groups employed varimax rotation. An eigenvalue of 1.0 was required for the termination of factor extraction.

Upon submission of the data for each of the four groups to Q-factor analysis, it was discovered that the total percentage of variance accounted for ranged from 89.2 to 93.6, with that accounted for by the first factor ranging from 67.7 to 78.8 and by the second factor from 2.7 to 3.8. In terms of the common variance, the percentage accounted for by the first factor ranged from 74.3 to 85.2 and by the second factor from 2.9 to 4.1. The number of factors which emerged for the four groups ranged from nine to thirteen. Upon examination of these findings, it was determined that the procedure should be duplicated with a limitation on the number of factors which could emerge, in order to see if the first factor accounted for as large a variance and the second factor for as small a variance as shown in the initial analysis over the groups. With a three-

factor specification, the first factor percentage for common variance ranged from 91.4 to 94.2 and the second factor from 3.1 to 4.8. With a two-factor specification, the first factor percentage for common variance ranged from 95.0 to 96.9 and the second factor from 3.1 to 5.0. These results suggested the abandonment of a discriminant analysis and the conclusion that the responses to the ideal political candidate did not vary as a function of respondent characteristics.

Means[24] *and Standard Deviations*[25] *for the Ideal Political Candidate*[26]

Means for the responses to the ideal political candidate credibility items fell between 1.352 ("honest-dishonest") and 3.496 ("adventurous-cautious"), with thirteen of the items below 2.0, thirteen of the items between 2.0 and 3.0, and three of the items over 3.0. Standard deviations for these items ranged from 0.716 ("intelligent-unintelligent") to 1.510 ("calm-anxious"), with thirteen of the items below 1.0, fifteen of the items between 1.0 and 1.5, and one of the items over 1.5.

Means for the responses to the ideal political candidate homophily items fell between 2.418 ("shares my beliefs-doesn't share my beliefs") and 3.697 ("personality similar to mine-personality dissimilar to mine"), with four of the items below 3.0 and nine of the items over 3.0. Standard deviations for these items ranged from 1.019 ("likes same politicians that I like-doesn't like same politicians that I like") to 1.444 ("educational background similar to mine-educational background dissimilar to mine").

Single Sample t-Values[27] *and Strengths of Association* (W^2)[28] *for Ideal Political Candidate*

Upon completion of the frequency distributions to establish ideal candidate means and standard deviations, the data were

submitted to a one-tailed single sample *t*-test, as described by Blalock,[29] using a .05 level as an acceptable criterion for significance. This procedure was performed in order to test the extremity of the semantic differential against any other positioning of the ideal political candidate on the scale.

Using 1.652 as the critical value of *t* at the .05 level for subjects responding to the ideal political candidate, it was determined that a significant difference existed between the observed mean and the expected mean (the extremity of the semantic differential) for all credibility and homophily items. The *t*-values emerging from this analysis ranged as follows: (1) for political candidate credibility, from 8.476 ("reliable-unreliable") to 44.574 ("attractive-unattractive"); and (2) for political candidate homophily, from 24.877 ("shares my beliefs-doesn't share my beliefs") to 45.712 ("personality similar to mine-personality dissimilar to mine").

Following this procedure, the data were submitted to a strength of association test (omega squared),[30] as described by Hays,[31] to determine the substantive effect of significant deviations from the extremity of the semantic differential. In doing so, the following range of percentages was found: (1) for political candidate credibility, from 14.51% ("honest-dishonest") to 83.66% ("attractive-unattractive"); and (2) for political candidate homophily, from 61.43% ("shares my beliefs-doesn't share my beliefs") to 84.30% ("personality similar to mine-personality dissimilar to mine"). Employing 40% as a criterion for omega squared values in determining actual significant deviations from the extreme,[32] it was found that for twenty out of the twenty-nine political candidate credibility items

(69%) and for all of the political candidate homophily items, the deviations were statistically significant.

Development of Recoding Strategy

On the basis of the initial and subsequent omega squared calculations, the scale for each credibility and homophily item was adjusted to one of the several recoding strategies[33] shown in Figure 1 below:

Strategy 1 (standard coding)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strategy 2 (ideal is positioned at second interval)

2 1 2 3 4 5 6

Strategy 3 (ideal is positioned at third interval)

3 2 1 2 3 4 5

Strategy 4 (ideal is positioned at fourth interval)

4 3 2 1 2 3 4

Figure 1. Recoding Strategies Adapted for Credibility and Homophily Items.

The appropriateness of one recoding strategy over another for each individual item was determined by the lowest omega squared value obtained in connection with that item. If, for example, an item had a mean of 2.473, it was submitted to two strength of association tests beyond the initial omega squared calculation. In the two subsequent analyses, an omega squared value was obtained with an expected mean of two, then with three, rather than with one, as had been done in the initial calculation. The subsequent analyses were conducted to check the significance of the deviation of the

actual mean (2.473) against the second and third interval (using an expected mean of two and three, respectively), such that the lowest of the three omega squared values could be used as an indicator of the specific interval at which the ideal political candidate could be said to be located for that item (if, indeed, the standard coding strategy did not indicate the extreme positive interval as the appropriate location).[34]

DISCUSSION

This study was designed to examine the conceptualization of the ideal political candidate, utilizing source credibility and homophily as a basis for analysis. In addition, this conceptualization was examined across selected voter characteristics to determine if it varied on this basis.

Using the terminology initially employed by Osgood, Suci, and Tannenbaum[35] in describing the rating positions for the semantic differential and using the results of the omega squared calculations performed in this study, it is possible to say that the ideal political candidate is one who is perceived as being: (1) "extremely" believable, reliable, good, energetic, just, honest, responsible, competent, intelligent; (2) "quite" experienced, bold, poised, sociable, admirable, nice, relaxed, cheerful, intellectual, kind, good-natured, trained, expert; and (3) "slightly" attractive, adventurous, verbal, calm, talkative, extroverted, aggressive. In relationship to the voter, this individual is one who is perceived as being: (1) "quite" similar to his/her beliefs; (2) "slightly" similar in his/her goals for the country, political party, political attitudes, cultural background, politician preferences, political beliefs; and (3)

"neutral" in terms of similarity in personality, social class, educational background, goals in life.

An examination of response means for the ideal political candidate shows that the source credibility items were consistently nearer to the extreme positive end of the scale than were those for homophily. This finding suggests that voters consider criteria associated with a political candidate more crucial in the evaluation of their idealness than characteristics which describe similarities between them.

A review of the data derived from responses to the ideal political candidate further suggests that the differentiation among credibility items between those positioned at the extreme and those positioned significantly away from the extreme could be described as being related to either one of two aspects in the relationship between a candidate and his/her potential voters: (1) the task environment, in which the candidate's competence and character are envisioned in relationship to his/her potential position upon election to office; and (2) the interpersonal environment, in which the candidate's composure, extroversion, and sociability in relationship to his/her potential position are realized.[36] In the first case, examples of scale items (positioned at the extreme) would be: "honest-dishonest," "reliable-unreliable," and "responsible-undependable." In the second case, examples of scale items (positioned significantly away from the extreme) would be: "attractive-unattractive," "adventurous-cautious," and "calm-anxious." The results of this study suggest that it would be more crucial to a potential voter that a political candidate be high in competence and

character, rather than in composure, extroversion, or sociability.

It is interesting to note some of the responding patterns which emerged for specific scale items in this study in the perception of the ideal political candidate. Honesty seems to be the most important criterion in evaluating such an individual. This seems reasonable in view of the nature of the office politicians seek and especially in view of recent investigations of numerous political officials, as a result of the Watergate case and other government scandals. Expertness appears to be a quality desired only in moderate quantity for such an individual. This may be due to the fact that voters want a politician who is flexible, willing to learn, and receptive to the advice of others. The fact that individuals want an extremely energetic candidate suggests two possible interpretations: (1) someone who works long, hard hours; or (2) someone who is dynamic in his/her relationship with other people. One interpretation relates to the commitment a politician has toward his/her job, the other relates to his/her style in dealing with people. The similarity in background between voter and candidate does not seem to be that important as a determinant of voting behavior, either in terms of social class, education, or cultural heritage. The fact that similarity of educational background appears to be a relatively unimportant criterion is interesting, since college students were the respondents in this study. The similarity between voter and candidate in political attitudes and beliefs is only moderately high on the list as a determinant of voting behavior, perhaps not as high as one might expect.

It is, perhaps, appropriate at this point to discuss methodological concerns which may have had some impact upon

the results of this study. It is conceivable that the high level of responding at or toward the neutral area of the semantic differentia (as reflected in the means) for the ideal candidate, accompanied by large variances in response patterns (as reflected in the standard deviations) for particular items, occurred as a result of the absence of true bipolar adjectives for these scales. Cases in point would be: "adventurous-cautious," "intellectual-narrow," and "verbal-quiet." An alternative explanation for such occurrences, as well as for those items with high means but moderate standard deviations, might be that the respondents found certain items to be relatively immaterial criteria in perceiving the ideal political candidate. Examples of items, perhaps, fitting within the parameters of this explanation would be: "personality similar to mine-personality dissimilar to mine," "educational background similar to mine-educational background dissimilar to mine," and "from same social class as mine-from different social class than mine." One should be cautioned, however, in making such interpretations, since it is, in fact, often difficult to determine whether respondents find an item an immaterial criterion in evaluating a target source, or whether they actually envision that source in this position on the scale for that item. An example in this study might be the item "attractive-unattractive," for which the mean was 3.407.[37]

Another difficulty for respondents in completing the scale items might have been the conceptual variability on an item in view of the numerous contexts in which it occurs. An example of an item presenting this problem would be "adventurous-cautious." While an individual might desire a politician who would be cautious in regard to diplomatic relations with foreign powers, he/she might also want a politician who would be at least somewhat adventurous

in regard to domestic inflation and the predominance of seemingly worn-out economic programs to deal with it.

A secondary purpose of this study was to determine whether the conceptualization of the ideal political candidate varied as a function of respondent sex, political party affiliation, liberal-conservative tendencies, or dogmatism. The results of the Q-factor analysis suggest that this conceptualization does not vary as a function of any of these voter characteristics. However, some caution is warranted in this interpretation in view of the subject population utilized in this study. While the sample population was relatively evenly distributed for the categories contained within each of the receiver variables, it was still, in fact, a college student population, one that is by nature rather homogeneous. The university from which this sample was obtained is made up largely of individuals from the same ethnic group (Caucasian) and who fall within a typical age range for college students. Contrary to the voting public as a whole, the respondents utilized in this study are subjected to similar influences on a day-to-day basis, by way of attending the same educational institution and by way of, generally speaking, exposure to the same environmental factors. It would, therefore, seem appropriate to assume that different responses could have been obtained if the geographic, occupational, socio-economic status, ethnic, and age variables had been broadened considerably.

In addition, it is possible that respondents would have been segmented by the Q-factor analysis had issue-oriented items been utilized in this study (rather than strictly ones focusing on the attributes of the target source). It is, perhaps, interesting to

note in this connection that respondents found it only slightly important that they be of the same political party as the ideal political candidate.[38]

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The implications of this study lie principally in the prescriptive information provided to real sources within the political campaign context. Generally speaking, the results of this study suggest that political candidates should seek to appear "extremely" competent, "extremely" high in character, "quite" composed and sociable, "slightly" extroverted, as well as "slightly" similar to the voters in their attitudes and beliefs, and "neutral" in similarity with the voters in their background and personality. This would seem to have practical implications for the campaign specialist whose task it is to coordinate the infusion of a positive image of the candidate into the minds of the electorate through appropriate channels of communication. This study clearly demonstrates that the voting public does not seek out candidates who possess all attributes in extreme quantity. It appears, rather, that there are some attributes for which moderation is desired.

From a theoretical perspective, there are several avenues for future research which may be advocated on the basis of this study: (1) the determination of specific verbal and nonverbal communicative behaviors which may be utilized by real political candidates to convey the impression of fitting the idealized image of the voters; (2) the establishment of factors which may alter the idealized conceptualization of political candidates; (3) the determination of whether or not a real political candidate ever completely

matches the ideal conceptualization used by an individual as a referent in making voting decisions; and (4) the establishment of the degree to which an ideal criterion is employed by different types of people (for example, authoritarians versus nonauthoritarians) in gauging the acceptability of political candidates.

FOOTNOTES

1. See Karl W.E. Anatol, "Communication Perspectives in Political Campaigns," in Ronald L. Applbaum, Owen W. Jenson, and Richard Carroll (editors), *Speech Communication: A Basic Anthology* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1975), pp. 312-325.

2. See Dan Nimmo and Robert L. Savage, *Candidates and Their Images: Concepts, Methods and Findings* (Pacific Palisades, California: Goodyear Publishing Company, 1976) and Dan Nimmo and Robert L. Savage, "Political Images and Political Perceptions," *Experimental Study of Politics*, 1 (1971), 1-36.

3. Source valence may be defined as the perceived characteristics of a communication source which lead to the affective bonds or attitudes toward that individual.

4. Richard W. Boyd, "An Explanation of Voting Defection," *American Political Science Review*, 63 (1969), 488-514.

5. Richard R. Fagen, *Politics and Communication* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1966).

6. David O. Sears, "Political Behavior," in Gardner Lindzey and Elliot Aronson (editors), *The Handbook of Social Psychology* (Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1969), pp. 315-458.

7. Peter B. Natchez and Irvin C. Bupp, "Candidates, Issues, and Voters," *Public Policy*, 17 (1968), 409-437.

8. Peter A. Andersen and Robert J. Kibler, "The Effect of Source Credibility, Attraction, and Homophily on Voter Preference," Paper presented at the International Communication Association Convention, Portland, Oregon, April 1976.

9. For example, see Stephen W. King, "An Experimental Analysis of the Effect of Message Type, Degree of Interpersonal Similarity, and Type of Interpersonal Similarity on Attitude Change and Ratings of Source Credibility," Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Southern California, 1971.

10. For example, see Velma J. Lashbrook and James C. McCroskey, "Source Valence: An Improved Conceptualization," Paper presented at the Western Speech Communication Association Convention, Honolulu, Hawaii, November 1972.

11. Source credibility may be defined as the degree of confidence in or favorable disposition toward a communicator. Homophily may be defined as the degree of perceived similarity between source and receiver in reference to a single attribute or a group of attributes.

12. Joseph Trenaman and Denis McQuail, *Television and the Political Image: A Study of the Impact of Television on the 1959 General Election* (London: Methuen, 1961).

13. Percy H. Tannenbaum, Bradley S. Greenberg, and Fred R. Silverman, "Candidates Images," in Sidney Kraus (editor), *The Great Debates* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962), pp. 271-288.

14. Roberta S. Sigel, "Image of the American Presidency: Part II of an Exploration in Popular Views of Presidential Power," *Midwest Journal of Political Science*, 10 (1966), 123-137.

15. Jay G. Blumler and Denis McQuail, *Television in Politics: Its Uses and Influence* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969).

16. Since the total score represents the summation of responses to individual items, this analysis only includes those subjects (341) who marked *all* items.

17. James C. McCroskey, Thomas Jensen, and Cynthia Todd, "The Generalizability of Source Credibility Scales for Public Figures," Paper presented at the Speech Communication Association Convention, Chicago, Illinois, December 1972. In this research, McCroskey, Jensen, and Todd isolated five dimensions of public figure credibility: (1) competence; (2) character; (3) composure; (4) extroversion; and (5) sociability.

18. For the purposes of this research, these scales were modified to semantic differential form from their original Likert scale form to allow for comparative analysis of the data derived from both instruments.

19. Peter A. Andersen and William R. Todd, "Scales for the Measurement of Homophily with Public Figures," Paper presented at the International Communication Association Convention, Chicago, Illinois, April 1975. In this research, Andersen and Todd isolated three dimensions of public figure homophily: (1) attitude-belief homophily; (2) background homophily; and (3) personality homophily.

20. Verling C. Troldahl and Fredric A. Powell, "A Short-Form Dogmatism Scale for Use in Field Studies," *Social Forces*, 44 (1965), 211-214.

21. The use of a self-labelling technique in establishing liberal-conservative tendencies is supported by Lloyd A. Free and Hadley Cantril, *The Political Beliefs of Americans: A Study of Public Opinion* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1967); Norman H. Nie and Kristi Andersen, "Mass Belief Systems Revisted: Political Change and Attitude Structure," *Journal of Politics*, 36 (1974), 540-591; Norman H. Nie, Sidney Verba, and John Petrocik, *The Changing American Voter* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1976).

22. A male target source was selected so as to establish some perceptual uniformity among the respondents (for example, in conceptualizing the attractiveness of the source).

23. Q-factor analysis has been employed for isolating respondent types in candidate perception studies previously. See, for example, Dan Nimmo and Robert L. Savage, "Political Images and Political Perceptions," *Experimental Study of Politics*, 1 (1971), 1-36 and Theodore J. Marr, "Q and R Analyses of Panel Data on Political Candidate Image and Voter Communication," *Speech Monographs*, 40 (1973), 56-65.

24. Refer to the Appendix for all of the means for responses to the ideal political candidate on all credibility and homophily items.

25. Refer to the Appendix for all of the standard deviations for responses to the ideal political candidate on all credibility and homophily items.

26. For this analysis, as well as all others associated with this study, the number "one" represented the extreme positive end of the scale, while the number "seven" represented the extreme negative end of the scale.

27. Refer to the Appendix for the results of the single sample *t*-test on the credibility and homophily items.

28. Refer to the Appendix for the results of the strength of association test (W^2) on the credibility and homophily items.

29. Hubert M. Blalock, *Social Statistics* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1960).

30. Initially, modal responses were considered as appropriate indicators for the marking of items away from the extreme positive end of the scale. Omega squared seemed to be a more viable alternative, however, since it provided a means to take variability of response into account, as a result of the single sample *t*-test calculation preceding it. This distinction appeared to be important, since without the consideration of variability, the interpretation which resulted from the analysis would exclude the specific positioning for every single score (the most frequent response being the only criterion considered).

31. William L. Hays, *Statistics* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963).

32. This 40% criterion was utilized in research conducted by Susan A. Hellweg, "An Examination of the Ideal Immediate Supervisor and Subordinate," *Journal of Business Communication*, in press. In both cases, a review of the data indiciated a logical separation at this point, in terms of the location of the specific percentages, as well as the type of items they represented.

33. Refer to the Appendix for a delineation of the specific recoding strategy employed for each credibility and homophily item.

34. Upon completion of these calculations, it was discovered that any item with a mean between 1.743 and 2.5 was placed in the second recoding strategy, any item with a mean between 2.5 and 3.5 was placed in the third recoding strategy, and any item with a mean between 3.5 and 4.5 was placed in the fourth recoding strategy. (Any item with a mean under 1.743 remained within the standard coding strategy, as determined by the initial omega squared calculation.)

35. Charles E. Osgood, George J. Suci, and Percy H. Tannenbaum, *The Measurement of Meaning* (Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1957).

36. Similar dichotomies of political candidate perception have been described by Roberta S. Sigel, "Effect of Partianship on the Perception of Political Candidates," *Public Opinion Quarterly,* 28 (1964), 483-496 and Dan Nimmo and Robert L. Savage, *Candidates and Their Images: Concepts, Methods and Findings* (Pacific Palisades, California: Goodyear Publishing Company, 1976). Sigel dichotomizes candidates by job-crucial attributes (for example, in terms of their honesty, intelligence, and independence) and personal attributes (for example, in terms of their speaking ability and friendliness). Nimmo and Savage dichotomize candidates by their political role (attributes which relate to their acts and qualifications as public officials) and stylistic role (attributes which are not directly political, such as the way in which they perform to convey their capabilities to the voters, as well as their personal qualities).

37. It may, in fact, have been the case that the respondents did not want to admit that attractiveness plays a part in their evaluation of the acceptability of political candidates.

38. The fact that similarity of political party affiliation did not seem to be a particularly important consideration may have been due to the age of the respondents involved.

APPENDIX

MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, t VALUES, STRENGTHS OF ASSOCIATION (W^2) FOR IDEAL POLITICAL CANDIDATE--CREDIBILITY

Scale Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Single Sample t Value	W^2
experienced-inexperienced	1.995	0.996	19.510	49.33%
believable-unbelievable -	1.743	0.987	14.860	36.11%
bold-timid ----------	2.473	1.042	27.793	66.48%
poised-nervous ----------	2.039	1.099	18.554	46.88%
attractive-unattractive -	3.407	1.071	44.574	83.66%
sociable-unsociable -----	2.151	1.022	22.135	55.63%
admirable-contemptible --	2.023	1.009	20.059	50.78%
adventurous-cautious ----	3.496	1.439	34.192	75.11%
nice-awful ----------	2.415	1.040	26.698	64.72%
reliable-unreliable -----	1.356	0.827	8.476	15.44%
relaxed-tense ----------	2.290	1.066	23.889	59.36%
good-bad ----------	1.703	0.917	14.958	36.53%
verbal-quiet ----------	2.536	1.123	26.947	65.03%
energetic-tired ---------	1.699	0.870	15.886	39.26%
just-unjust ----------	1.421	0.819	10.024	20.32%
cheerful-gloomy ---------	2.139	0.993	22.780	57.11%
honest-dishonest --------	1.352	0.838	8.186	14.51%
calm-anxious ----------	3.028	1.510	26.338	64.04%
intellectual-narrow -----	1.927	0.948	19.313	49.08%
talkative-silent --------	2.894	1.146	32.655	73.30%
kind-cruel ----------	2.072	1.011	21.020	53.06%
extroverted-introverted -	2.720	1.147	29.655	69.31%
good-natured-irritable --	1.890	0.858	20.227	51.14%
responsible-undependable	1.364	0.773	9.333	18.09%
aggressive-meek ---------	2.590	1.025	30.577	70.54%
trained-untrained -------	1.977	1.002	19.157	48.41%
competent-incompetent ---	1.506	0.860	11.500	25.23%
expert-inexpert ---------	2.095	1.029	21.058	53.15%
intelligent-unintelligent	1.485	0.716	13.472	31.64%

MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, t VALUES, STRENGTHS OF ASSOCIATION (W^2) FOR IDEAL POLITICAL CANDIDATE--HOMOPHILY

Scale Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Single Sample t Value	W^2
background similar to mine-background dissimilar to mine -----	3.647	1.135	45.638	84.29%
goals for the country same as mine-goals for the country different than mine ----------	2.609	1.187	26.817	64.86%
political party same as mine-political party different than mine ----	3.434	1.323	36.328	77.22%
personality similar to mine-personality dissimilar to mine -----	3.697	1.158	45.712	84.30%
from same social class as mine-from different social class than mine -	3.647	1.256	41.359	81.50%
shares my beliefs-doesn't share my beliefs -------	2.418	1.116	24.877	61.43%
like me-unlike me --------	3.503	1.103	44.696	83.73%
political attitudes about the same as mine-political attitudes not about the same as mine -	2.705	1.230	27.064	65.40%
cultural background similar to mine-cultural background dissimilar to mine ----------	3.492	1.075	45.309	84.10%
likes same politicians that I like-doesn't like same politicians that I like ----------	3.296	1.019	44.154	83.36%
educational background similar to mine-educational background dissimilar to mine -----	3.692	1.444	36.877	77.75%

continued....

MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, t VALUES, STRENGTHS OF ASSOCIATION (W^2) FOR IDEAL POLITICAL CANDIDATE--HOMOPHILY

Scale Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Single Sample t Value	W^2
political beliefs same as mine-political beliefs different than mine ----	2.746	1.272	26.862	64.94%
goals in life about same as mine-goals in life not about same as mine -	3.553	1.336	37.544	78.36%

RECODING STRATEGY UTILIZED FOR EACH SCALE ITEM

CREDIBILITY

Scale Item	Overall Recoding Strategy Utilized
experienced-inexperienced	2
believable-unbelievable	1
bold-timid	2
poised nervous	2
attractive-unattractive	3
sociable-unsociable	2
admirable-contemptible	2
adventurous-cautious	3
nice-awful	2
reliable-unreliable	1
relaxed-tense	2
good-bad	1
verbal-quiet	3
energetic-tired	1
just-unjust	1
cheerful-gloomy	2
honest-dishonest	1
calm-anxious	3
intellectual-narrow	2
talkative-silent	3
kind-cruel	2
extroverted-introverted	3
good-natured-irritable	2
responsible-undependable	1
aggressive-meek	3
trained-untrained	2
competent-incompetent	1

continued....

RECODING STRATEGY UTILIZED FOR EACH SCALE ITEM

CREDIBILITY

Scale Item	Overall Recoding Strategy Utilized
expert-inexpert	2
intelligent-unintelligent	1

Strategy 1 = (Standard Coding) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strategy 2 = 2 1 2 3 4 5 6

Strategy 3 = 3 2 1 2 3 4 5

Strategy 4 = 4 3 2 1 2 3 4

RECODING STRATEGY UTILIZED FOR EACH SCALE ITEM

HOMOPHILY

	Overall Recoding Strategy Utilized
background similar to mine-background dissimilar to mine	4
goals for the country same as mine-goals for the country different than mine	3
political party same as mine-political party different than mine	3
personalty similar to mine-personality dissimilar to mine	4
from same social class as mine-from different social class than mine	4
shares my beliefs-doesn't share my beliefs	2
like me-unlike me	4
political attitudes about the same as mine-political attitudes not about the same as mine	3
cultural background similar to mine-cultural background dissimilar to mine-	3
likes same politicians that I like-doesn't like same politicians that I like	3
educational background similar to mine-educational background dissimilar to mine	4
political beliefs same as mine-political beliefs different than mine	3
goals in life about same as mine-goals in life not about same as mine	4

Strategy 1 = (Standard Coding) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Strategy 2 = 2 1 2 3 4 5 6

Strategy 3 = 3 2 1 2 3 4 5

Strategy 4 = 4 3 2 1 2 3 4